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Antecedents of the Export Decision – A Case Study Approach

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Abstract

The study examines the antecedents of the export decision with a particular focus of the role of the decision maker. The study reports on 19 cases of SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises), active in manufacturing industries and service sectors, in Flanders. Semi-structured interviews with the leading manager and export decision maker of SMEs, complemented by a survey of managerial characteristics, were used to analyze whether typical profiles of late and early exporters identified in the literature are observed in reality ('pattern matching'). Based on a review of the literature, a framework was developed to characterize the profile of a SME that is expected to start exporting early in its life cycle, and brought in contrast with the profile of a late exporter. The framework takes service heterogeneity based on the degree of contact that is required with clients to deliver the service into consideration. A core role in the framework is given to the managers' global mindset, the way in which the manager reacts to push (reactive) and pull (proactive) factors, and how he or she deals with opportunities, and circumvents obstacles to internationalization.

Keywords

Decision to export, international mindset, service heterogeneity, case study

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PREFACE (in Dutch)

Woord vooraf

In deze studie bekijken we de antecedenten van de exportbeslissing, en geven we bijzondere aandacht aan de rol van de eigenschappen van de manager in de pre-export fase. We onderzoeken de rol van 'push' en 'pull' factoren, obstakels en faciliterende factoren, en gaan na hoe de manager's persoonlijke eigenschappen hiermee interageren.

De auteurs bedanken de leden van de Werkgroep "Internationaal Ondernemen" van het Steunpunt evenals de leden van de Stuurgroep van het Steunpunt voor hun bemerkingen bij de totstandkoming van de studie. Dit onderzoeksrapport kwam tot stand dankzij de financiële steun van de Vlaamse Overheid.

1. Introduction

A growing literature has studied the internationalization processes of firms (Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul; 1975; Cavusgil, 1980) and the drivers of the decision to commence exporting (Wiedersheim et al., 1978; Tan et al, 2007; Tan et al., 2014). The literature has highlighted the importance of the decision maker and the learning process in the period before internationalization (Tan et al. 2007). Such learning processes are often triggered by stimuli that encourage firms to expand abroad. The decision maker (manager) and the way she perceives, and reacts to, external stimuli (push and pull factors) have important consequences for the speed and scope of firms' internationalization.

Given the salience of the role of the manager, there is surprisingly little in-depth research on the role of managers' personal characteristics and the way these interact with the external environment. Moreover, prior studies have often focused on manufacturing firm and exports of products, while there is less known about internationalization processes of services firms. Against this background, the aim of this study is to examine in detail the antecedents of the export decision, the role of the managerial mindset, and the way in which the manager reacts to push (reactive) and pull (proactive) factors, deals with opportunities, and aims to circumvent obstacles to internationalization. Based on a review of the literature, we develop a framework identifying profiles of SMEs expected to start exporting either early or late in their development. The framework takes a key characteristic of service heterogeneity into consideration: the degree to which (face to face) contact is required with clients to deliver the service (Lovelock, 1983).

The focus on managerial mindset calls for qualitative case study research through which new insights can be obtained (Chetty, 1996; Vissak, 2010). The aim is to investigate *why* and *how* the export decision was taken – which cannot be uncovered in quantitative research using statistical information. In this study, we report on case study research covering 19 firms (both active in manufacturing and services) in Flanders. Within the services industry, the empirical focus is on services that are IT-enabled, as rapid developments in digitalization and online sales have led to growing opportunities for, but heterogeneous managerial approaches to, services exports. We used semi-structured interviews with the leading manager and export decision maker of the SMEs to examine to what extent profiles identified in the literature can indeed be observed in the different cases ('pattern matching'; Yin, 2014). Deviations from expected patterns can provide new insights into the complex processes preceding the export decision. By focusing on semi-structured interviews with decision makers, the role of the managerial mindset, and the heterogeneous experience of services industries, our study aims to provide new insights on potential new or adapted roles for government policies aiming to stimulate exports.

The remainder of this study is structured as follows. Chapter 2 presents the conceptual model of expected firm profiles leading to early or late internationalization, taking into account the literature on managerial mindset and services exporters. Chapter 3 describes the methodology, case selection, and data collection. The case study results are presented in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5 we offer conclusions and policy recommendations.

2. Conceptual model

2.1 The antecedents of exporting

The conceptual model in this paper relies on Boiardi and Sleuwaegen (2014). In their study, the decision to export is conceived as the response of firms to a set of external push and pull factors. Obstacles can hamper this process and lead to a delayed decision to export, while facilitating factors can accelerate the export decision process. In addition, company-specific factors, such as product or service characteristics and the sources of the firm's competitive advantage, could have a considerable impact. The precise role of all these determinants in a firm's decision to export is dependent on the traits of the manager(s) of the firm. The manager can stimulate a fast internationalization process by developing an export strategy for the firm from inception, by proactively taking advantage of opportunities (pull factors), push factors and facilitating factors, and by creatively circumventing obstacles. A detailed review of the literature and explanation of the factors triggering the export decision can be found in Boiardi and Sleuwaegen (2014).

Our study aims to investigate empirically how managerial characteristics, push (reactive) and pull (proactive) factors, facilitators, obstacles, and company-specific factors affect the speed at which firms embark on an internationalization strategy targeting export markets. The conceptual model that forms the basis of this study is displayed in figure 1. The model draws mainly on insights from the literature dealing with manufacturing firms. Some researchers argue that the theoretical models developed in the literature on internationalization of manufacturing firms should not be directly applied to service firms because of the intrinsic differences between the two sectors (e.g. Johanson and Vahlne, 1990). Other researchers suggest that the literature on manufacturing firms offers a base that can be used to understand international service operations (Boddewyn et al., 1986; Winsted and Patterson, 1998; Javalgi and White, 2002). Javalgi et al. (2003) show empirically that a model explaining the antecedents of international operations in the manufacturing sector is also applicable to service firms. Cicic et al. (2002) investigate the antecedents of international performance of Australian service firms by adjusting some explanatory variables in order to increase relevance in a service context. This study follows a similar approach. We start from the theoretical foundation that is provided in the literature on the antecedents of the export decision in the manufacturing sector, but account for the inherent differences between manufacturing and services. In particular, we focus on the difference between contact and non-contact services.

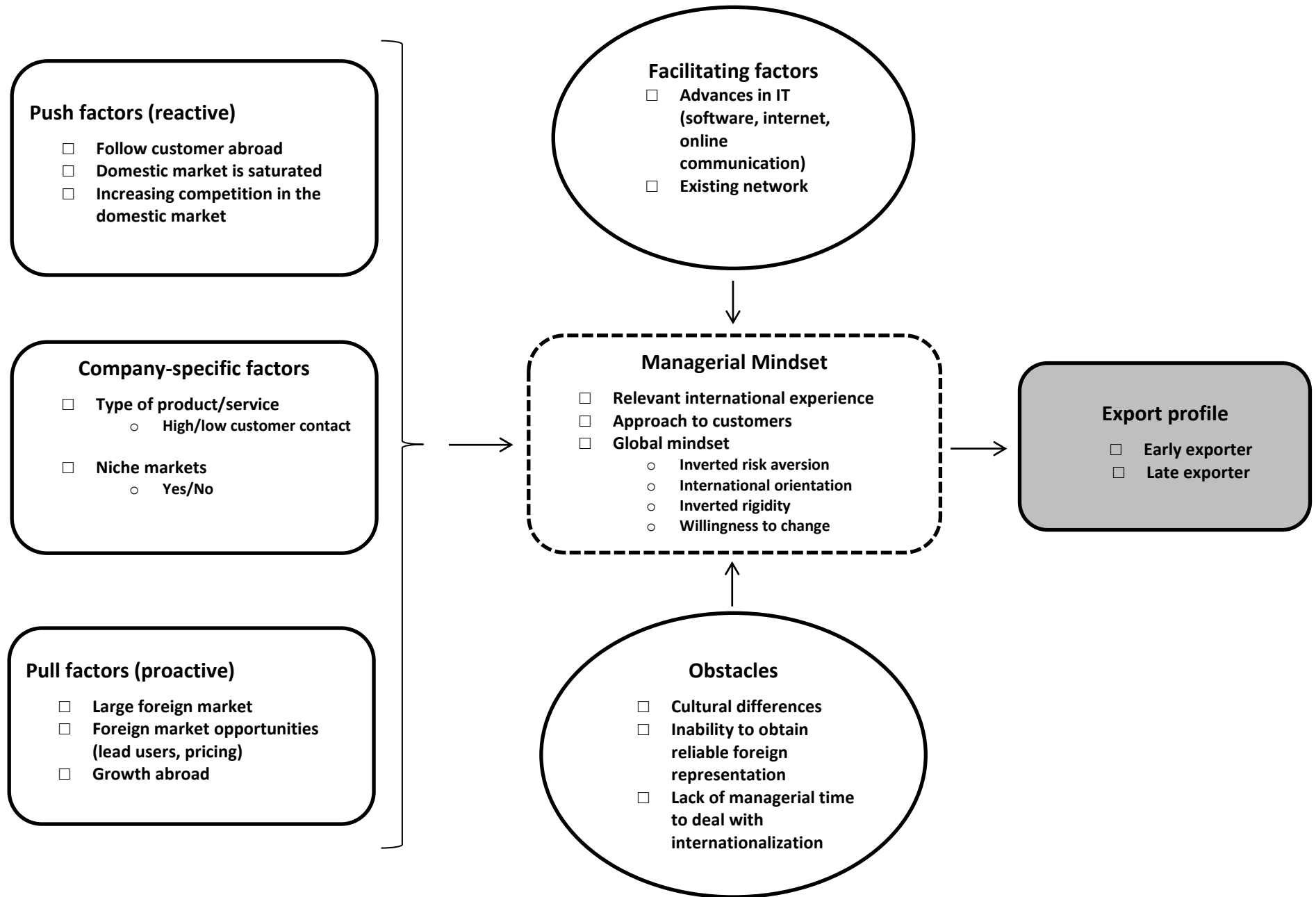
The conceptual model in figure 1 shows influences on firms' decision to enter export markets relatively early or late in their development. Push factors represent 'reactive' forces that, often as a consequence of constraints on the domestic market, 'push' the firm to enter foreign markets. Examples of push factors related to the domestic market are competitive pressure, inefficient scale of production due to a saturated domestic market, and increasingly

unfavorable regulation in the home country. Firms can also be driven towards foreign markets in a reactive fashion if they receive unsolicited orders from abroad (Leonidou, 1998). If push factors play a role, they usually lead to late exports, as they typically become manifest for firms with a longer experience operating in the domestic market.

Pull factors stimulate firms to expand internationally in a proactive manner. These factors are present if firms search for opportunities abroad, attracted by large, growing, and attractive foreign markets. Proactively pursuing opportunities abroad leads to rapid internationalization because firms obtain richer foreign market knowledge (Zhou, 2007).

Obstacles can hamper firms' entry into foreign markets. Examples are a lack of information about foreign markets, a shortage of financial resources, and a lack of time by the management to explore international opportunities (OECD, 2009). Facilitators that make it easier for firms to export are technological advancements such as digitalization and the internet and reductions in trade barriers.

Figure 1: Conceptual model of the antecedents of the export decision



We highlight a number of company-specific factors that are considered important for the export decision process. First, if firms are active in specialized niche markets, the domestic market often does not provide sufficient sales potential to reach minimum efficient scale and to cover the costs of R&D (Bleaney and Wakelin, 1999). This can imply that firms operate internationally from inception with an internationalization strategy incorporated in their business plan (Zucchella et al., 2007).

A second factor is whether firms sell products or services. Services have several features that can make it harder to sell them internationally compared to goods (Zeithaml et al., 1985; Winsted and Patterson, 1998). Erramilli (1990) argues that “soft services”, i.e. services for which production and consumption are not separable, rely on entry modes that correspond to a stronger local presence such as foreign direct investment, while exporting might be better suited for goods and “hard services”. Patterson and Cicic (1995) find that foreign market risks are higher for services in particular if they require more contact with the customer.

Hence, in the context of the export decision, an important distinction is between so-called ‘high contact’ and ‘low contact’ services (Chase, 1978; Lovelock, 1983; Patterson and Cicic, 1995). The need for direct contact with customers when selling and/or delivering the service and the necessity to adapt and tailor the service to individual customers’ needs, can hamper effective export. First, because export strategies are more costly as they will often require a local presence in the foreign market. Second, because suitable adaptation and customer interaction requires more detailed knowledge of the market and is complicated by cultural, administrative, and economic differences (Ghemawat, 2001).² Because of the higher costs and risks of internationalization, the expectation is that firms selling high contact services internationalize later. Patterson and Cicic (1995) find that exporting by firms selling high contact services (that are often bundled with goods) was often driven by reactive push factors: firms needed to follow clients internationally and received unsolicited orders from abroad. These types of service providers often need an office in the foreign country in order to operate properly in international markets, and their success depends more strongly on managerial commitment to expand abroad (Patterson & Cicic, 1995).

2.2 Managerial characteristics

The decision maker plays a key role in the internationalization process of the firm. Many studies emphasize the key role of the manager’s personal characteristics in the learning and preparation process prior to internationalization (Andersson and Victor, 2003; Zhou et al., 2010), and for the way the manager perceives and responds to push and

² We abstract from another important dimension in the classification of services, tangibility (e.g. Patterson & Cicic, 1995), as our case study primarily deals with IT-enabled services.

pull factors (Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978; Tan et al., 2007). Other studies emphasize that the entrepreneur's (personal) network can be of primary importance (Amal and Rocha Freitag Filho, 2010).

Managerial characteristics play a significant role in the decision to enter foreign markets and the international expansion process (e.g. Harveston et al., 2000; Ellis and Pecotich, 2001; Nummela et al., 2004; Zucchella et al., 2007). Objective characteristics affecting managers' attitude to internationalization are international experience (Sambharya, 1996; Osland et al., 2006), whether the manager takes a proactive or reactive approach to external stimuli and new business and client development the number of languages spoken, and the entrepreneur's education (Dichtl et al., 1984; Acedo and Jones, 2007; Zucchella et al., 2007). The set of subjective characteristics influencing internationalization we conceptualize as the managers' 'global mindset' (Dichtl et al., 1984; Dichtl et al. 1990). Rhinesmith (1992) defines a global mindset as an entrepreneur who "scan(s) the world from a broad perspective, always looking for unexpected trends and opportunities to achieve personal, professional, or organizational objectives".³ Managerial characteristics determining the global mindset are: the level of risk-aversion, the manager's international orientation, rigidity, and willingness to change (Dichtl et al., 1984; Nummela et al., 2004; Acedo and Jones, 2007). Harveston et al. (2000) find that managers of 'born global' firms display higher levels of international orientation, and have more international experience and risk tolerance compared to managers of firms that internationalize more gradually. Acedo and Jones (2007) show that the speed of internationalization is strongly affected by the entrepreneur's proactivity and perception of risk.

The managerial characteristics associated with a global mindset also affect the attitude towards external stimuli regarding internationalization (Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978; Tan et al., 2007). Opportunity seeking entrepreneurs are more responsive to the pull of foreign markets while managers with a less proactive attitude mainly react to push forces (Dana et al., 2009). Managers with a global mindset are able to manage complexity and translate risks and uncertainties into opportunities (Rhinesmith, 1992).

2.3 Expected patterns

Based on the conceptual model described in section 2.1 and the managerial characteristics discussed in section 2.2., we can construct typical predicted antecedents of firms exporting early in their development and firms exporting relatively late. The predicted antecedents are schematically shown in Figures 2a and 2b. Among service firms, low contact services are easier exported than high contact services. Firms with a niche market focus often have a greater need for an early international orientation. For late exporters, push factors are more important and managers are more likely to exhibit a reactive approach to external stimuli. Early exporters are attracted to pull factors, with managers taking a more pro-active approach. The stronger the global mindset of the manager and the more

³ Levy et al. (2007) provides a comprehensive review of the literature on 'global mindset'.

international experience she has, the more likely it is that the firm will export early. Facilitating factors spur and obstacles can impede early internationalization.

Figure 2a: Predicted antecedents of early export decisions

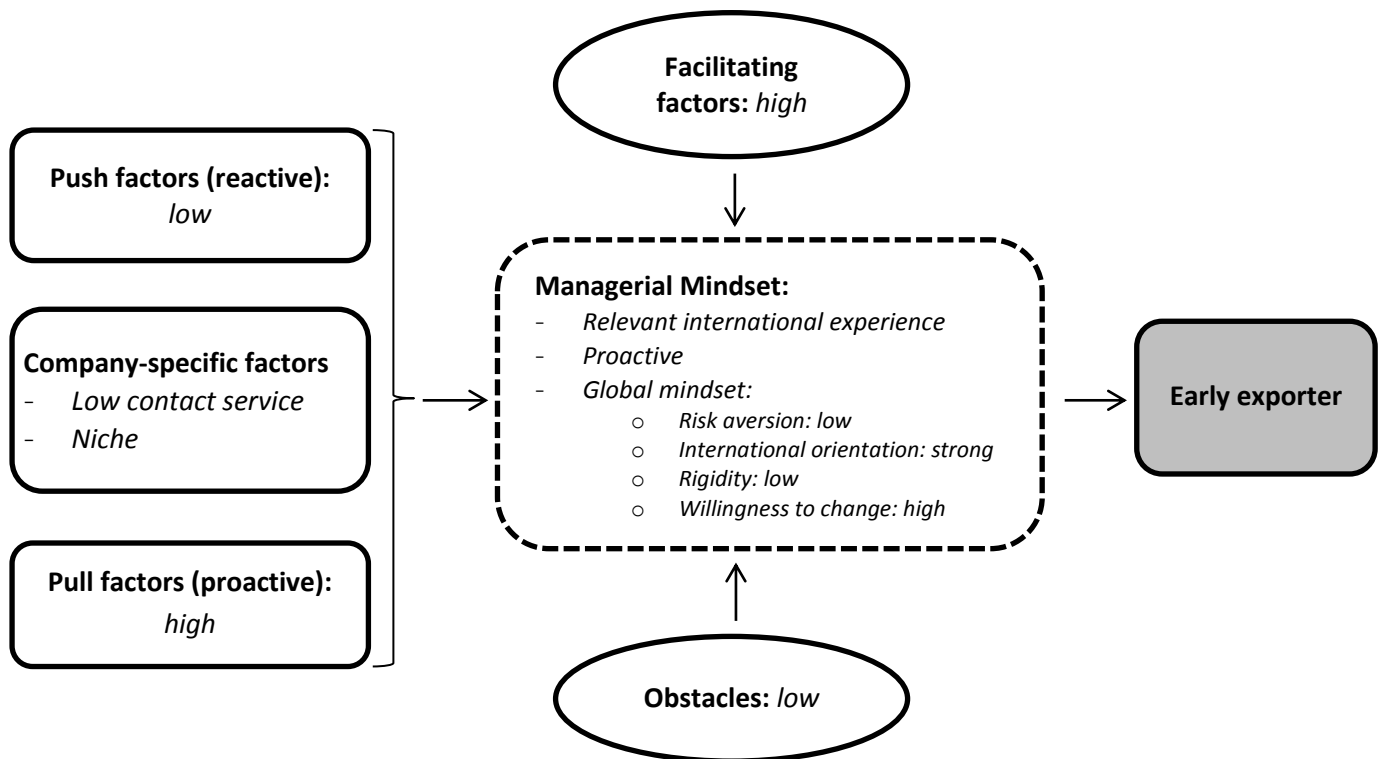
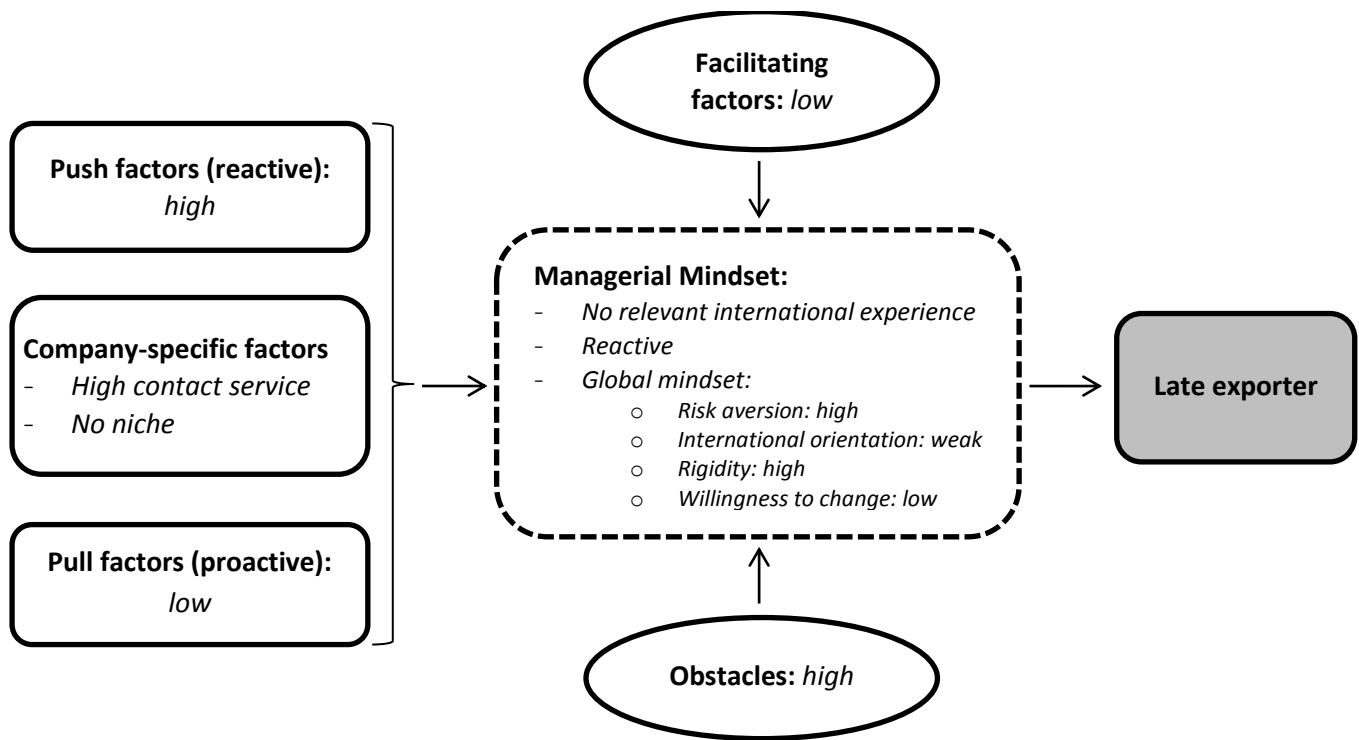


Figure 2b: Predicted antecedents of later export decisions



3. Methodology

3.1 Case study research

We conduct multiple case studies to examine in detail whether the patterns of antecedents of the export decision corroborates the patterns predicted. We use the 'pattern matching' technique to examine the degree to which predicted patterns based on theory are observed in the case study results (Trochim, 1989; Hak and Dul, 2009; Yin, 2014).

Applying the case study method is especially useful for studies attempting to explain how or why a certain (complex) phenomenon occurred (Yin, 2014). "The case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events, such as managerial processes" (Yin, 2009). Although the case study method has not been used as frequently as quantitative methods in the international business research literature (Chetty, 1996; Vissak, 2010), the method is valuable when investigating complex managerial processes and to uncover unexpected influences on managerial decisions (Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975; and Bingham, 2009). Given the aim to investigate *why* some firms internationalize early in their lifecycle and others at a later stage, and which role the manager plays in this process, the case study method is a well suited methodology. While the case study method

does not allow statistical generalization ((Yin, 2009) using a multiple-case study design allows for more robust inferences on the validity of tested theories (Yin, 2014).

3.2 Selection of Cases

The sample consists of 19 small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) of which 6 are active in the manufacturing sector, and 13 in the services sector. One manufacturing firm has a strong service component in its sales. All firms are based in Flanders. Among service firms, there was a sampling focus of firms using IT (IT-enabled services). This feature combined with progress in digitalization and internet commerce, is expected to allow for a more active export strategy among service firms, and this trend may also have consequences for export promotion policies.

Potential candidates for the study were selected either by Flanders Investment and Trade or by the KU Leuven team after screening the firms based on several selection criteria. First, all firms in the sample are SMEs, i.e. they employ fewer than 250 people, and their annual turnover does not exceed 50 million euro⁴. Second, all firms in the sample have either started exporting or have experienced a substantial change in their export activities (a significant increase in export following a period of limited exports) within the past 5 years. This time span of five years is important to make sure that the interviewee is able to recall the details from the internationalization process under study. A third criterion is that the interviewed manager or entrepreneur has been involved in the export decision-making process and is still employed by the firm at the time of the interview.

Following Acedo and Jones (2007) in their approach to distinguish between firms with a high and low internationalization speed, we label a firm as an ‘early exporter’ when it entered foreign markets within five years after the firm was founded, and ‘late exporter’ when it took more than 5 years before the firm expanded internationally.

Tables 1a and 1b show the number of sample firms that are classified as either early or late exporters. The group of manufacturing firms consists of both niche (e.g. authentic craft products for outdoor and garden) and non-niche (e.g. manufacturing of prefab concrete elements) firms. Examples of high contact services are various types of consultancy and training services. Low contact service firms that are included in our sample are, among others, suppliers of web applications or integrated management systems. **Table 1a: Classification of manufacturing firms in the sample**

Manufacturing	Early exporters	Late Exporters
	E10	L5
	E11	L6
		L7
		L8

⁴ Definition European Commission (2014), http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/facts-figures-analysis/sme-definition/index_en.htm

Table 1b: Classification of service firms in the sample

Type of service	Early exporters	Late Exporters
High contact	E4	L3
	E7	L4
	E8	
	E9	
	E5	
	E6	
	E2	
Low contact	E1	L1
	E3	L2

3.3 Data Collection

Qualitative and quantitative information was obtained from semi-structured interviews with the manager involved in the export decision process (in most cases the CEO). The interviews, which lasted on average 1.5 hours, were tape-recorded and transcribed. If further questions arose during the data analysis process, additional questions were answered by contacting the interviewee by phone once more.⁵

The interviewees were also asked to answer a series of survey questions that allow assessing objective and subjective managerial characteristics.⁶ The first part of the survey deals with objective managerial characteristics such as age, education and international experience. Most of these questions were taken from Dichtl et al. (1984), while two questions on international experience and prior studies were added. A second set of questions focuses on subjective managerial qualities. It includes a test scale measuring a self-declared preference for risk based on Dahlbäck (1990) and Acedo and Jones (2007); an indicator of the manager's international orientation based on Govindarajan and Gupta (2001) and Gupta and Govindarajan (2002); and questions on rigidity and willingness to change based on Dichtl et al. (1984) and Dichtl et al. (1990). All questions use 5-point Likert scales. The names of the items (risk aversion, rigidity, etc.) were removed from the questionnaire to avoid confirmation bias.

The degree of proactivity of the manager was assessed by considering the way in which the contact with (new) clients is established and maintained. Proactive managers actively approach their customers (e.g. cold calling) to develop new businesses or put effort in finding them, for example through going to fairs, conferences, etc. (see e.g. Zhou, 2007).

⁵ In addition, we consulted the Belfirst (part of Bureau van Dijk's Amadeus database) to obtain and confirm financial information on the firms.

⁶ The questions are listed in Appendix 2 (in Dutch).

The existing literature on qualitative research suggests four conditions that have to be fulfilled for a robust research design: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability (Yin 2009; 2014). These four criteria are also increasingly used in the strategic management literature to evaluate the extent to which case studies are executed in a rigorous manner (e.g. Gibbert et al., 2008). The research design in this study satisfies these criteria. The evidence draws on multiple sources (*construct validity*): the interviewee's attitude and mindset was assessed both in the interview and by means of the answers collected in the questionnaire. The pattern matching methodology ensures *internal validity* (a proper alignment between theory and empirical test). The replication logic in the multiple case study design ensures some generalizability of theory across contexts (*external validity*). Finally, a detailed case study protocol was developed and employed to guide the entire data collection process and ensure *reliability*. The case protocol was adjusted and improved on the basis of pilot case studies.

4. Results

Tables 2a and 2b show the pattern matching outcome for late and early exporters respectively. The colors indicate how well the results match with the predicted patterns described in section 2, with dark green indicating a perfect match and red indicating no match:

Perfect match	Rather good match	Medium match	Rather weak match	No match
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The text in the cells indicates the strength of each factor. For push and pull factors, facilitators and obstacles, the strength varies from high to low; for proactivity the range is from active to passive.

Overall, the tables indicate a rather good match between predicted and actual patterns, judging from the dominant green surface of the tables, but there are also some notable exceptions. Appendix 3 further illustrates the pattern matching results by comparing observed and predicted patterns for two specific service firms: an early exporter (E1) and a late exporter (L1).

Starting from the first factor, whether the firm is active on niche markets, we see that most of the early exporters operate in a niche market (8 out of 11 early exporters). Only one of the late exporters is active in a niche market. The CEO of firm E1 argued the following: *"It would make no sense for us to build something only for the Belgian market. It's a very small market, and I would have to limit myself to only Belgian content companies, but I'm in such a niche market that there are maybe (only) six of them"*.

Generally, few differences are observed in the pattern matching results between manufacturing and service firms. The difference between high and low contact services firms, surprisingly, appears not systematically translated into

late versus early exporting. In spite of the fact that it is difficult for high contact service companies to export without incurring relatively high adaptation and exporting costs, a large number of high contact service firms can be found among early exporters. When looking into more detail to these firms, it can be seen that they typically build their export strategy on a local presence, by employing local agents, or by establishing a foreign affiliate. Eight out of the 9 high contact service firms that participated in this study operate internationally and have established a foreign presence, whereas all low contact service firms and all but one manufacturing firms export without such a presence. During the interviews with high contact service firms, the difficulty to sell abroad without having an office in the foreign country was often highlighted. Involvement in an existing network of domestic and international partners appeared as an important facilitator in the internationalization process (e.g. L3, L4, E2, E4).

The predicted differences in importance of push and pull factors for early and late exporters align well with the empirical observations. Push factors are the dominant drivers for late internationalization. The CEO of firm L1: *“Our product was used in one place in France, because one of our customers has an office there”*. Pull factors such as *“The company has to grow”*, or *“We really have the ambition to be global”* were often noted among early exporters – even if internationalization was not deemed necessary to survive. Few pull factors appeared relevant for late exporters: only 3 out of 8 late exporters mentioned a pull factor in addition to the prevalent presence of push drivers.

As expected, late exporters seldom benefit from strong facilitators while they often face obstacles. The early exporters typically benefit from internationalization facilitators. Contrary to the expectations, however, they appear often confronted with obstacles. Examples of obstacles that were often mentioned are costs in terms of time and money to travel and to visit foreign customers, cultural differences with exporting countries (in particular if it concerned China and India) and finding employees able to carry out foreign expansion. Frequently mentioned facilitating factors were the manager’s international client network, the use of IT facilitating international sales, and harmonization of European regulation.

Tables 2a and 2b also contain information on the characteristics of the manager and the actions the managers took prior to the export decision. The majority of the managers of early exporting firms had acquired relevant international experience before they started to work in the SME (8 out of 11 managers of early exporters, compared to 3 out of 8 managers of late exporting firms). Most managers of early exporters take a proactive approach (in approaching customers): 7 decision managers of the early exporters were proactive, while only 4 managers applied a combination of an active and passive approach. There is no clear pattern concerning pro-activity of late exporters, however. An interesting additional observation was that the managers of SMEs L7 and L8 were specifically hired to conceive an export strategy for the firm. Both firms subsequently changed their strategy from acting passively to acting more proactively, highlighting the important role of managerial attitude.

The third element of managerial orientation considered is the subjective 'global mindset'. The global mindset score is an aggregate measure based on the survey questions. It aggregates information on risk aversion, international orientation, rigidity and willingness to change. First, a total average Likert score of the manager was computed based on the average score of these four managerial characteristics (with a maximum of 5). Subsequently, the managers were ranked based on the aggregate score. Rank 1 corresponds to the strongest global mindset. Figure 2b shows that the upper half of the ranking is mainly occupied by managers of early exporters, with manufacturing firm E10 an exception, while late exporting firms have managers with lower ranks on global mindset.

Table 2a: Pattern matching for late exporters

Firms		L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8
Early/late		Late	Late	Late	Late	Late	Late	Late	Late
Niche		No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Product/type of service		Service (LC)	Service (LC)	Service (HC)	Service (HC)	Product	Product	Product	Product/service
Push factors		High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Pull factors		Low	Medium-	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium-	Medium
Facilitating factors		High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium-	Medium	Medium-
Obstacles		High	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium+
Managerial characteristics	international experience	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
	proactive	Passive	Medium+	Medium-	Medium+	Medium	Passive	Active	Medium
	global mindset rank*	19	16	14	13	15	11	17	9
Precedence abroad		No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes

Notes: LC = low contact; HC = high contact.

*Based on inverted risk aversion, global orientation, inverted rigidity, willingness to change; green if ≤ 7 for early exporters or ≥ 13 for late exporters; yellow if ≤ 12 and ≥ 8 for both groups; if else: red. max = 1 (i.e. the observation having the highest global mindset score); min = 19 (i.e. the observation having the lowest global mindset score)

Table 2b: Pattern matching for early exporters

Firms		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10	E11
Early/late		Early	Early	Early	Early	Early	Early	Early	Early	Early	Early	Early
Niche?		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Product/service		Service (LC)	Service (HC)	Service (LC)	Service (HC)	Service (HC)	Service (HC)	Service (HC)	Service (HC)	Service (HC)	Product	Product
Push factors		Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium+	Medium	Low	Low	High
Pull factors		High	Medium-	Low	High	High	Medium+	Medium	High	High	High	Medium
Facilitating factors		High	Medium-	High	High	Medium-	High	High	High	Medium	Medium+	High
Obstacles		Medium-	Medium+	Medium-	High	Medium+	Medium-	Medium+	Medium+	Low	High	High
Managerial characteristics	Relevant international experience	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	Proactive	Medium	Active	Active	Active	Active	Medium	Medium	Active	Active	Active	Medium
	Global mindset rank*	2	12	10	7	3	5	6	1	4	18	8
Presence abroad		No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

Notes: LC = low contact; HC = high contact.

*Based on inverted risk aversion, global orientation, inverted rigidity, willingness to change; green if ≤ 7 for early exporters or ≥ 13 for late exporters; yellow if ≤ 12 and ≥ 8 for both groups; if else: red. max = 1 (i.e. the observation having the highest global mindset score); min = 19 (i.e. the observation having the lowest global mindset score)

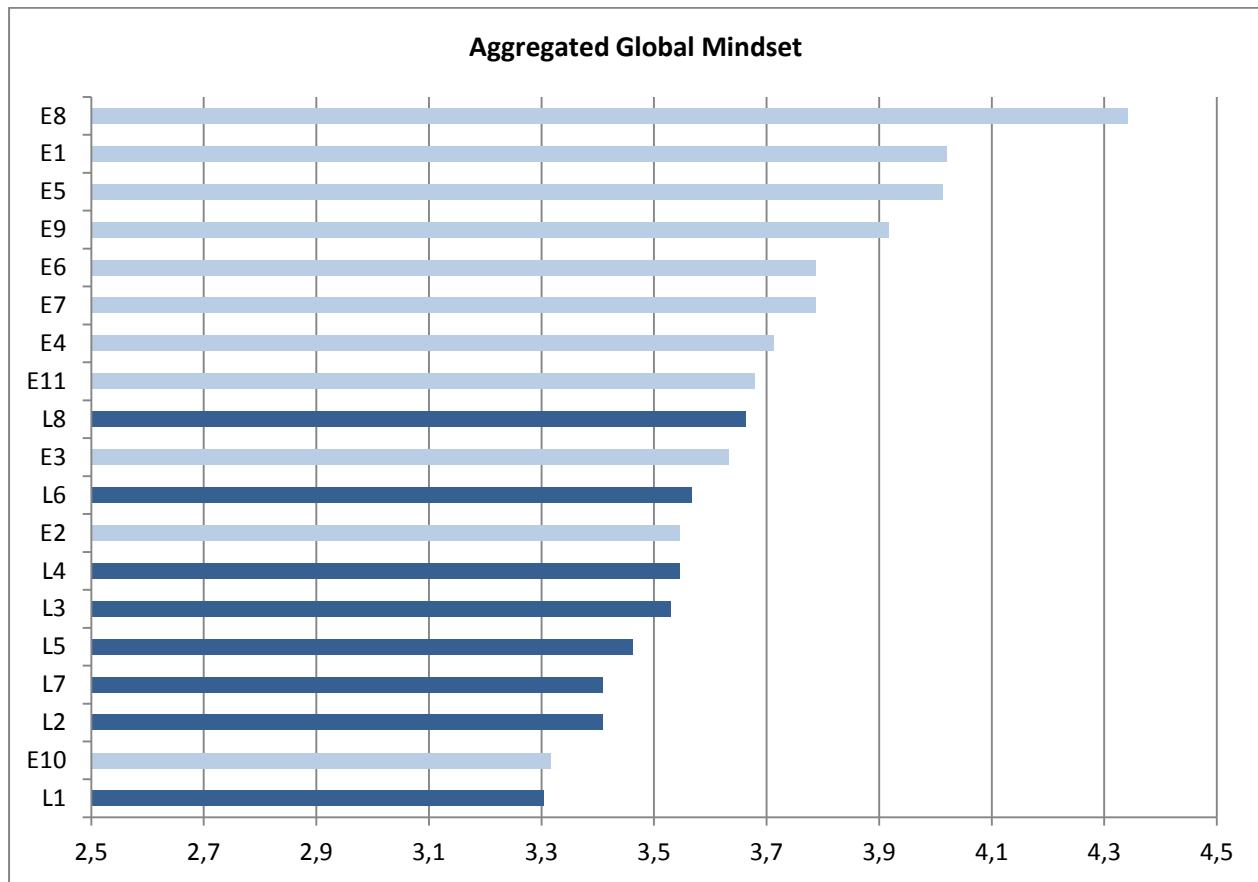
Further information on the global mindset is provided in Table 3 and Figure 3. Table 3 shows that the global mindset scores of managers of early exporters are on average substantially higher than those for managers of later exporting firms. The difference is observed for all characteristics, with a somewhat smaller difference on average for willingness to change.

Table 3: Average scores of early exporters and late exporters on the four characteristics constituting 'global mindset'

Managerial characteristics	Early exporters	Late exporters
Inverted risk aversion	3,48	3,18
International orientation	4,33	3,98
Inverted rigidity	3,35	2,90
Willingness to change	4,03	3,89
Global mindset	3,80	3,49

Figure 3 displays the aggregated scores for the global mindset of the managers. Early exporters are indicated in light blue, late exporters in dark blue. It is clear that early internationalizing firms, on average, have managers with high scores on 'global mindset'. The following quote made by the CEO of an early exporter in the services sector (E1) is illustrative: *"I think it's painful to see how important the role of the CEO is. ... If I am not there for two weeks, I already notice that something has changed in the company, that the soul of the firm is intertwined with the person that guides the firm."* Furthermore, it is interesting to note that among late exporting manufacturing firms, three out of four firms expanded internationally after the appointment of a new manager.

Figure 3: Global mindset scores across cases



Deviations between predicted patterns and actual patterns observed can often be explained by the role of the manager. For example, the manager of firm E3, operating in a niche market, did not take a proactive approach towards pull factors. This manager had no international experience and only had a median rank on the manager's global mindset score. Another deviation from the predicted patterns relates to the obstacles to international expansion. More generally, obstacles to internationalization for the early exporters were perceived by the managers (with a global mindset) as opportunities, leading them to creatively and quickly search for solutions, or simply accept them. The manager of an early exporter (E4) pointed to the difficulty in understanding the legislation related to the firm's products in several foreign countries and the different customer preferences, but solved these problems by looking for the right partners. The manager of E8 explicitly mentioned: *"Complexity of export does not exist, you just have to be willing to do it"*. Managers of late internationalizing firms, on the other hand, took substantial time to deal with the hampering factors, temporarily halting export plans. The managing director of a late exporter mentioned: *"It is probably difficult to enter countries such as Romania or Bulgaria as it could be necessary to change the product"*. We also note that, often in relationship with managers' prior experience, the (international) network of the manager was a

considerable facilitating factor during the export decision process. Quite a few managers of early internationalizing firms were able to make use of such a network (e.g. E1, E4, E6 and E9).

Export promotion policies

During the interviews attention was also given specifically to the views of the managers on actual and desired government support for internationalization. In general, the support schemes, in particular subsidies given to conduct market research and visit new export destinations and the possibility to make use of available expertise about local markets through FIT representatives abroad, were highly appreciated. Managers of service firms were on average less aware of the facilities available and less quick to explore and request support than managers of manufacturing firms. It was assumed that knowledge and expertise to provide this support was not always available. It appears that more publicity for existing support programs that are (also) directed towards service firms can be helpful.

The managers of service firms, in particular those selling high contact services, highlighted that their export success hinges on finding good local agents or establishing a local sales presence in foreign countries. Implementing these strategies requires a different type of expertise, more fine grained market knowledge, and a stronger (financial) commitment compared with conventional export strategies.

Overall, the cases illustrated a heterogeneity in needs for effective internationalization depending on the type of firm and manager. In some cases, the strongest obstacles appeared to be a lack of information on market opportunities and the absence of a proactive approach, related to a limited global mindset. Here, creating managerial awareness of opportunities could have an important effect – as the experience of firms exhibiting a change in management suggests. In case firms are active in niche markets and internationally oriented, the major obstacles are developing a network in their specific niche market and (knowledge of) different regulations across countries. In case firms are active in high contact service markets, exporting is facilitated by foreign investments or enlisting foreign agents ensuring smooth delivery of services adapted to clients' needs, and the challenges are to find reliable local partners and to facilitate foreign investment.

5. Conclusions and Policy Implications

The aim of this study is to examine in detail the antecedents of the export decision with a particular focus of the role of the manager - decision maker. The study reports on 19 cases of SMEs, active in manufacturing industries or service sectors, in Flanders. Within the services industry, the focus is on services that are IT-enabled, as rapid developments in digitalization and online sales have led to growing opportunities for, but heterogeneous managerial approaches to, services exports. Semi-structured interviews with the leading manager and export decision maker of the SMEs,

complemented by a survey of managerial characteristics, were used to analyze the extent to which typical profiles of late and early exporters identified in the literature can indeed be observed in practice ('pattern matching'). Based on a review of the literature, a framework was developed to characterize such profiles of SMEs expected to start exporting either early or late in their development. The framework takes a key characteristic of service heterogeneity into consideration: the degree to which (face to face) contact is required with clients to deliver the service. A core role in the framework is played by the managers' 'global mindset', and the way in which the manager reacts to push (reactive) and pull (proactive) factors, deals with opportunities, and aims to circumvent obstacles to internationalization.

Firms with a niche market focus often have a greater need for an early international orientation. Early exporters typically are driven by the 'pull' of foreign market opportunities, take a proactive approach, try to circumvent obstacles and benefit from facilitating factors such as developments in IT and ecommerce. Managers typically have earlier experience relevant for internationalization, exhibit a less rigid management approach, and display a high willingness to change and to take risks. For late exporters, push factors are more important and managers are more likely to exhibit a reactive approach to external stimuli, to be relatively risk averse and rigid, and to display a weaker willingness to change and international orientation.

The results of the cases studies generally show a strong correspondence between the predicted patterns and the observed patterns in the cases, with one important exception. In spite of the fact that it is difficult for high contact service companies to export without incurring relatively high adaptation and exporting costs, a large number of high contact service firms can be found among early exporters. When looking into more detail to these firms, it can be seen that they typically build their export strategy on a local presence, by employing local agents, or by establishing a foreign affiliate. Managers in such cases have a pronounced global mindset and display a determination not to be deterred by obstacles to foreign expansion.

Other deviations between predicted patterns and actual patterns observed could often be explained by the role of the manager. For instance, a relatively late internationalization in the context of ample opportunities could be related to a lack of international experience and global mindset characterizing the manager. In cases where the SMEs exported early but where rapid internationalization was not directly expected, managers' creative approach to identify opportunities early and deal with obstacles was salient. Overall, our study confirmed the central role played by managerial characteristics in complex export decision processes.

Some limitations of the case study design should be mentioned. Only the general manager of the SME was interviewed, while potential single informant bias can be reduced by interviewing multiple respondents in the firm. The choice of cases depended on several factors and policy concerns and was therefore not fully balanced across sectors or across late and early exporting "polar types" (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007).

Policy Implications

The contribution of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to the Flemish economy can be enhanced if SMEs achieve growth through effective exporting strategies. However, despite various policy initiatives to support internationalization, a significant share of SMEs is still not active on foreign markets (Lucian et al., 2014). Our study suggests that understanding the decision process in the firms' pre-export phase is important to tailor support policies to different firm and management profiles.

Our study highlighted the heterogeneity in needs of managers and SMEs to support internationalization activities. Early exporters are typically attracted by the potential of foreign markets and often operate in niche markets. These firms need specific support in foreign countries to enable their access to specialized business networks and to deal with differing regulations across countries. Given the highly specialized nature of their products and market niche, the challenge for support organizations is to build up expertise across a variety of such niches in focal countries of expansion. The broadening of such expertise also applies to services export, which is a more recent phenomenon and often driven by developments in IT, international connectivity and e-commerce.

In typical cases of late exporters, the strongest obstacles appeared to be a lack of information on market opportunities and the absence of a proactive managerial approach, which relates to a weak 'global mindset'. Here creating managerial awareness of opportunities could have an important effect, which is emphasized by the experience of firms exhibiting a change in management. In this case, an adapted version of an 'export readiness' survey instrument would appear useful to identify export potential. In addition, offering incentives to enroll in dedicated courses on internationalization strategies, or active coaching by experienced managers appear to be promising approaches.

6. Nederlandstalige Samenvatting

De studie analyseert aan de hand van 19 gevallen van exporterende ondernemingen uit de verwerkende nijverheid en de diensten, hoofdzakelijk IT diensten, welke proceselementen voorafgaan aan de beslissing om te exporteren. Hierbij worden cases vergeleken van ondernemingen die eerder laat in het ondernemingsbestaan tot de exportbeslissing kwamen met cases die slaan op jonge ondernemingen die vroeg gestart zijn met exporteren.

Van de 19 cases waren er 6 ondernemingen actief in de nijverheid en 13 in de dienstensector. Binnen de dienstensector had een relatief groot aantal cases betrekking op diensten die met IT ondersteuning geleverd konden worden. Binnen de dienstensector onderscheiden we hoogcontact en laagcontactdiensten, waarbij de eerste meestal nood hebben aan aanpassing van de dienst op maat van de klant en direct klantencontact. Deze laatste aspecten zijn in de regel een hinderpaal voor directe export.

De cases worden bestudeerd via de methode van “pattern matching”, d.w.z. via het opstellen van typerende patronen van omgevingsfactoren en management karakteristieken voor verschillende uitkomsten, in ons geval de verschillende ‘timing’ van export. Zodoende wordt vanuit de verworven inzichten uit eerdere studies een bepaald patroon geassocieerd met vroege exporteurs, d.w.z. ondernemingen die in de eerste vijf jaren van hun levenscyclus beginnen met exporteren, terwijl een andere patroon geassocieerd wordt met late exporteurs, d.w.z. ondernemingen die later starten met exporteren. Vervolgens wordt nagegaan of de cases deze patronen ondersteunen. Eventuele afwijkingen van de patronen worden dieper geanalyseerd, en vormen de basis van de verfijning van eerdere inzichten.

Voor vroege exporteurs wordt ervan uitgegaan dat zij vooral gedreven worden door pull factoren, d.w.z. buitenlandse marktopportunities, en meer gericht zijn op nichemarkten. Obstakels zijn relatief beperkt en er zijn relevante faciliterende factoren die internationalisering gemakkelijk maken zoals IT ontwikkelingen en deregulering. Het management wordt gekarakteriseerd als ervaren met internationalisering, weinig risico-afkerig, proactief, internationaal georiënteerd, en flexibel met een grote bereidheid tot veranderen. In deze studie vatten we deze elementen samen onder het begrip ‘global mindset’. Voor late exporteurs is het patroon omgekeerd: vooral push factoren spelen een rol: reactieve drijfveren gerelateerd aan marktontwikkelingen, concurrentie en capaciteitsfactoren die de onderneming ‘verplichten’ om te exporten om levensvatbaar te blijven. Voor late exporteurs worden ook meer hindernissen en weinig faciliterende factoren verwacht. Het management wordt verwacht eerder reactief te zijn, rigide, sterk risico-afkerig, zonder internationale ervaring en met een geringe internationale oriëntatie.

De analyse van de cases leverde een opvallende consistentie tussen a priori veronderstelde patronen en de gereveleerde patronen in de onderzochte cases op. Opvallend is het belang van een globale mindset voor vroege exporteurs, en de samenhang hiervan met de perceptie dat obstakels minder belangrijk zijn. Er was een belangrijke uitzondering op het pattern matching patroon: waar ex ante verwacht werd dat hoogcontact diensten moeilijker te exporteren zouden zijn, laten de vroege exporteurs juist een oververtegenwoordiging van hoogcontact diensten zien.

De ondernemingen hebben hier obstakels overwonnen door actief naar lokale vertegenwoordigers op zoek te gaan of te investeren in een lokale vestiging in het buitenland. De 'global mindset' van de manager speelde ook in dit proces een cruciale rol.

Uit de resultaten volgen een aantal beleidsconclusies. De gevalstudies benadrukken het belang van gedifferentieerde vormen van ondersteuning voor ondernemingen met exportpotentieel, en dit impliceert een instrumentarium op maat. De belangrijkste differentiërende factor is het type product of dienst: of het product of de dienst een 'niche product' of standaardproduct is, en of de dienst omschreven kan worden als hoogcontact of laagcontact. Bij ondernemingen die snel internationaliseren in niche markten is de nood aan voorbereiding en kennisverwerving bij toetreding van meerdere buitenlandse markten belangrijk. De kennisopbouw wordt best gekoppeld aan netwerking in het binnenland en in de buitenlandse markten. Hiervoor is bij buitenlandse vertegenwoordigingen belast met exportpromotie specifieke expertise vereist met betrekking tot de niche markt en lokale modaliteiten. Deze expertise lijkt minder aanwezig in dienstensectoren waar internationalisering pas later een belangrijke trend is geworden.

In dienstensectoren, en dan met name in hoogcontact diensten, zijn vaak investeringen in lokale aanwezigheid in het buitenland vereist om export te faciliteren. Export stimuleren bij dienstenondernemingen die 'hoogcontact' diensten leveren houdt daarom in dat men ook klant- en marktgerichte investeringen in de buitenlandse markten mede ondersteunt. Bovendien is er meer nood aan specifieke kennis over lokale markten en regels en omstandigheden met betrekking tot het opzetten van agentschappen en dochterondernemingen.

Bij late exporteurs speelt voornamelijk een gebrek aan kennis van exportopportuniteiten en hoe de confrontatie met gepercipieerde obstakels aan te gaan – in relatie met een gebrek aan ervaring en 'global mindset'. Hier zou het interessant zijn indien een uitbreiding op de bestaande Exportmeter specifieke aandacht kan geven aan de identificatie van export opportuniteiten, waarbij coaching van het management en het stimuleren van deelname aan specifieke internationaliseringscursussen een nuttige rol kunnen spelen. In het algemeen laat de studie concluderen dat bij het sensibiliseren en versnellen van de exportbeslissing bij ondernemingen met exportpotentieel er vooral aandacht moet besteed worden aan de globale mindset van de ondernemer, en het management. Een interessante vaststelling in dat verband is de case waarin de wissel van management, met het 'enten' van managers met exportervaring in de onderneming de exportbeslissing heeft bewerkstelligd.

7. References

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8. Annexes

8.1 Structure of the interviews (in Dutch)

1. Praktische informatie over het interview

2. Basisinformatie over geïnterviewde, de onderneming, en de exportactiviteiten

Basisinformatie: geïnterviewde

- ✓ Rol in de onderneming
- ✓ Werkervaring in de onderneming
- ✓ Werkervaring en functie in vorige ondernemingen
- ✓ Buitenlandervaring: tijdens werk en/of studies
- ✓ Opleiding

Basisinformatie: Karakteristieken van de onderneming

- ✓ Familiebedrijf; eigendom
- ✓ Sector en diensten/producten, B2B/B2C
- ✓ Geschiedenis, opstart

Karakteristieken van de Onderneming

- ✓ Massaproduct/niche product
- ✓ Standaarden/certificering; kwaliteit van producten en diensten
- ✓ Basis voor concurrentievoordeel: kosten, differentiatie, kwaliteit
 - Op welk gebied ben je sterker/zwakker dan de concurrentie? (binnenlandse en buitenlandse concurrentie)
- ✓ Rol van proces en product innovatie
- ✓ Merknamen, reputatie, marketing
- ✓ Klantennetwerk
- ✓ Flexibiliteit en verandering
- ✓ Kernproducten met specifieke karakteristieken

- ✓ Financiële middelen

Export activiteiten en historie

Start van de export, precieze historie, directe aanleiding voor de start van de export:

- ✓ Hoeveel jaar na de opstart van de onderneming werd gestart met export?
 - Waarom zo snel/Waarom zo lang gewacht?
- ✓ Werd exportbeslissing gemaakt in team? (Hoeveel personen waren betrokken in de exportbeslissing?)
- ✓ Verschillende producten en markten; naar hoeveel landen werd geëxporteerd in het begin, en nu? Waarom naar die landen?
- ✓ Export status nu
- ✓ Export / omzet: in het begin versus nu
- ✓ Eerdere opstart van export maar stopgezet?
- ✓ Verwachtingen voor de toekomst

3. Aanpassing van het product aan de klant

- ⇒ Is veel aanpassing van het product vereist wanneer het wordt verkocht aan een nieuwe binnenlandse klant?
- ⇒ Is veel aanpassing van het product vereist wanneer het wordt verkocht aan een nieuwe buitenlandse klant?
 - In welke mate zijn de noden hetzelfde in de binnenlandse en buitenlandse markt?

4. 'Wat heeft u ertoe gedreven om te starten met export?'

Pull/proactive

- ✓ Groei opportuniteiten in het buitenland; omvangrijke buitenlandse markten
- ✓ Gunstige wisselkoers/kostenpositie. Kostenconcurrentiekracht
- ✓ Leermogelijkheden/lead customers in het buitenland

Push/reactive

- ✓ Beperkte groeimogelijkheden op de thuismarkt
- ✓ Korte levenscyclus van product en hoge R&D uitgaven
- ✓ Volgen van bestaande klanten naar het buitenland
- ✓ Ongevraagde opdrachten tot levering uit het buitenland.
- ✓ Overcapaciteit
- ✓ Onzekerheid rond toekomstige markt. Additionele markten als diversificatie

- ✓ (Nieuwe) regels remmen binnenlandse groei
- ✓ Grotere concurrentiedruk op de thuismarkt, lagere marges
- ✓ Volgen van binnenlandse concurrenten die zijn gestart met de export

5. Is de exportbeslissing weloverwogen gebeurd? Was het m.a.w. deel van de bedrijfsstrategie? (export readiness)

- Heb je deze stap voorbereid?
- Was je achteraf gezien
 - beter later begonnen met export?
 - beter vroeger gestart met export?

6. 'Waren er bepaalde zaken die het exportproces moeilijker hebben gemaakt? Hoe heb je deze moeilijkheden/problemen aangepakt?'

a. *Interne factoren*

b. *Omgevingsfactoren*

Obstakels

- ✓ Beperkte middelen (werkkapitaal) om export expansie te financieren
- ✓ Gebrek aan informatie m.b.t. buitenlandse opportuniteiten, mogelijke klanten, partners
- ✓ Gebrek aan expertise om informatie over buitenlandse markten te analyseren
- ✓ Moeilijkheid om buitenlandse partners en klanten te bereiken en met hen te onderhandelen
- ✓ Problemen om goede buitenlandse externe vertegenwoordiger te vinden;
- ✓ Geen capaciteit om personeel uit te zenden; geen getraind personeel
- ✓ Te weinig tijd bij het management om zich in exportmogelijkheden te verdiepen
- ✓ Moeilijk om prijs/kwaliteit van producten/diensten buitenlandse concurrenten te verbeteren (zie ook karakteristieken van de onderneming).
- ✓ Hoge kosten van transport, tarieven, export en import procedures
- ✓ Verschillen in standaarden en specificaties impliceren dure product aanpassingen, certificering.
- ✓ Cultuurverschillen

7. 'Waren er bepaalde zaken die het exportproces gemakkelijker hebben gemaakt?'

Faciliterende factoren

a. *Interne factoren*

b. *Omgevingsfactoren*

- ✓ Ondersteuning door de overheid, exportpromotie, informatievoorziening, financiering

- ✓ Ontwikkelingen in ICT faciliteren internationale handel, contacten met klanten
- ✓ Harmonisering van regelgeving en verlaging tarieven (WTO, bilaterale akkoorden, EU)
- ✓ Eerdere ervaring met buitenlandse partners vanwege import
- ✓ Informatie over exportopportuniteiten door observatie export gedrag van andere ondernemingen in de sector (export 'spillovers')
- ✓ Aanwezigheid in binnenlandse of buitenlandse netwerken
- ✓ Levering aan lokale dochteronderneming van buitenlands concern
- ✓ Aanwezigheid van werknemers met buitenlandse ervaring

8. Belang van het competitief voordeel van de onderneming in het exportproces

9. Welke soort steun van overheidsorganisaties zou de onderneming het meest kunnen helpen?

10. 'Hoe sta je zelf tegenover internationalisering in het algemeen, zowel m.b.t. werk als vrije tijd?'

Managers en Mindset

- ✓ Persoonlijke netwerken van managers (internationaal netwerk)
- ✓ Perceptie rond internationalisering
- ✓ Voorkeur om te reizen in vrije tijd + frequentie
- ✓ Internationalisering als doelstelling
- ✓ Gestructureerde benadering van ondernemingsstrategie?
- ✓ Proactieve benadering m.b.t. het verzamelen van informatie over buitenlandse markten
- ✓ Attitude ten opzichte van het nemen van risico's
- ✓ Global mindset (cosmopolitische attitude en leiderschapsstijl, visie op relevante markt, creatieve kijk op verschillen in culturen, bereidheid tot aanpassing)

8.2 Management Characteristics (in Dutch)

Objectieve Managementkarakteristieken

Based on Dichtl et al. (1984) + addition of two questions on international experience (during work/studies)

Gelieve het best passende vakje met de best passende optie aan te vinken (☒)

1. Tot welke leeftijdsgroep behoort u?

☐ 24 -

☐ 25 – 39 jaar

☐ 40 – 50 jaar

☐ 51 +

2. Wat is uw hoogst voltooide opleiding?

☐ Basisonderwijs

☐ Middelbaar onderwijs

☐ Hoger onderwijs – korte type

☐ Hoger onderwijs – lange type

☐ Universitair onderwijs

3. Welke vreemde talen spreekt u vloeiend? Onder vloeiend verstaan we de mogelijkheid om (eventueel na enige tijd) in een land met deze taal te werken.

☐ Engels

☐ Frans

☐ Duits

☐ Spaans

☐ Andere:

4. Naar welke regio's gaat u vaak op vakantie?

☐ Vlaanderen

☐ Wallonië

☐ Andere Europese landen

☐ Andere continenten

5. Werd u geboren in het buitenland?

☐ Ja

☐ Neen

6. Heeft u gedurende een langere periode in het buitenland gewoond?

☐ Ja: Waar?

☐ Neen

7. Heeft u gedurende een bepaalde periode in het buitenland gestudeerd?

☐ Ja: Waar?

☐ Neen

8. Heeft u reeds internationale werkervaring?

☐ Ja: Hoe lang?jaar.....maanden

☐ Neen

9. Heeft u een andere nationaliteit dan de Belgische?

☐ Ja: Welke?

☐ Neen

Subjectieve Managementkarakteristieken

Gelieve het vakje met de best passende optie aan te vinken (☒)

DEEL 1: Attitude t.o.v. het nemen van risico's

Dahlbäck (1990)

1. Ik kan vrij onvoorzichtig zijn en grote risico's nemen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Ik durf vaak risicovolle dingen te doen, waaraan anderen twijfelen om het te doen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Ik denk dat ik in het algemeen vaak minder voorzichtig ben dan anderen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Ik heb vaak niet de moed om gevaarlijke of onaangename dingen te doen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Ik ben eerder avontuurlijk en hou ervan om risico's te nemen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Ik ben altijd zeer voorzichtig en denk eerst aan veiligheid.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. In belangrijke situaties heb ik nooit opzettelijk grote risico's genomen die ik kon vermijden.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Als het over belangrijke dingen gaat neem ik nooit risico's die ik kan vermijden.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Ik probeer altijd om situaties te vermijden die het risico met zich meebrengen om in problemen te geraken met andere mensen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Ik vermijd het doen van dingen waarbij ik het risico loop om bekritiseerd en verweten te worden als ik faal.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Ik denk dat ik vaak eerder moedig en onbevreesd ben wanneer ik iets doe.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Acedo and Jones (2007)

12. Producten of diensten verkopen op de buitenlandse markt brengt veel risico's met zich mee.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DEEL 2: Global orientation

Govindarajan and Gupta (2001); and Gupta and Govindarajan (2002); some questions are slightly adapted

1. In de interactie met andere personen heeft hun origine een impact op mij voor het al dan niet beschouwen van hen als gelijke.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Ik vind van mezelf dat ik in dezelfde mate open sta tegenover ideeën uit andere landen en culturen als tegenover ideeën uit mijn eigen land en cultuur.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Ik vind het een uitdaging om me in een nieuwe culturele context te bevinden en daarin te opereren.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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4. Wanneer ik een andere cultuur bezoek of erin leef ben ik gevoelig aan culturele verschillen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Wanneer ik interageer met mensen van andere culturen acht ik het belangrijker dat ik hen begrijp als individu dan dat ik hen als vertegenwoordiger van hun nationale cultuur beschouw.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Ik beschouw mijn waarden als een combinatie van waarden verworven uit meerdere culturen eerder dan uit één cultuur.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DEEL 3: Rigidity

Dichtl et al. (1984)

1. Ik ben vaak de laatste die opgeeft als er iets voltooid moet worden.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Er is meestal slechts één manier waarop een probleem het best kan opgelost worden.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Ik zou graag een positie hebben die frequente veranderingen vereist van de ene taak naar de andere.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Ik houd me meestal vast aan mijn mening, ook al hebben andere mensen er een andere kijk op.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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5. Ik stop en denk liever voordat ik reageer, ook voor minder belangrijke zaken.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Ik heb de neiging om snel van interesses en focus te veranderen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Ik ondervind meestal dat mijn eigen manier voor het oplossen van problemen de beste is, ook al lijkt het niet te werken in het begin.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Ik denk dat het meestal goed is om dingen op de conventionele manier uit te voeren.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Ik heb spontaan een groot aantal cursussen gevolgd.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Ik doe dingen liefst volgens een routine die ik zelf heb gepland.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DEEL 4: Willingness to change

Dichtl et al. (1984)

1. Kansen moeten gegrepen worden, ook als dit inhoudt dat er grote risico's moeten genomen worden.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Bedrijven moeten proberen actief te zijn in het buitenland.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. In bedrijven moeten innovaties zo snel mogelijk gerealiseerd worden.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Bedrijven moeten niet proberen internationale problemen op te lossen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Bedrijven moeten actief de ontwikkeling van de economie van andere landen steunen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. De werkwijze van de onderneming mag niet gewijzigd worden totdat een andere werkwijze heeft bewezen succesvoller te zijn.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Bedrijven die een crisis meemaken moeten de grote risico's die samenhangen met een fundamentele organisatorische verandering vermijden.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Managers moeten op een systematisch manier streven naar innovaties en veranderingen in de bedrijven waar ze werken.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Managers moeten altijd heel voorzichtig zijn bij het doorvoeren van veranderingen.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. In de toekomst zal het, zelfs voor kleine en middelgrote ondernemingen, niet langer volstaan om enkel belangstelling te hebben voor de binnenlandse markt.

HELEMAAL ONEENS	EERDER ONEENS	NIET EENS, NIET ONEENS	EERDER EENS	HELEMAAL EENS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8.3 Example of the Antecedents of Exporting: late versus early exporters

Figure A1a: Example of an early exporter

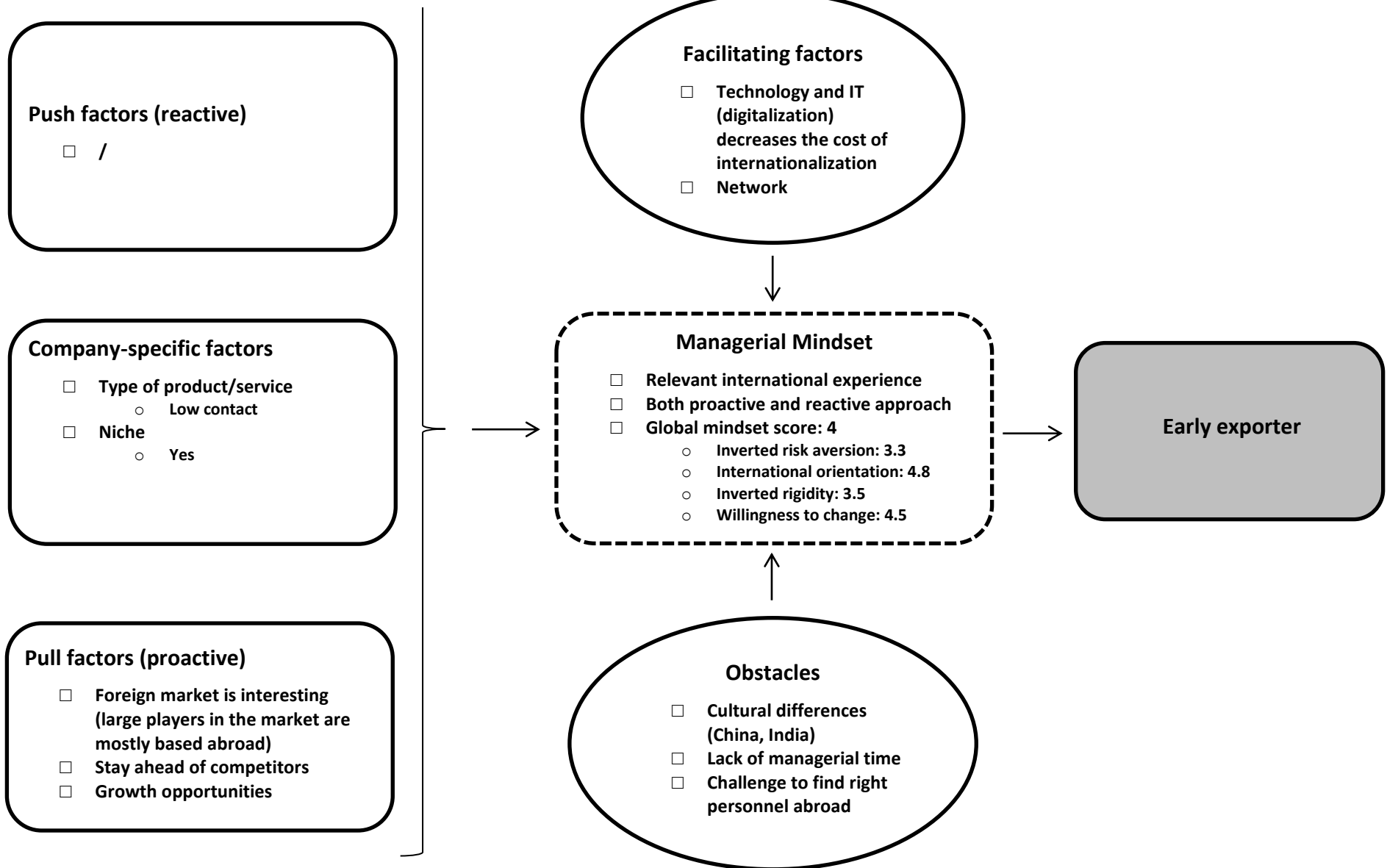


Figure A1b: Example of a late exporter

